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Message Text

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61
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-04 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05

L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-20

USIA-06 NEA-06 SAB-01 SAJ-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 /073 W
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R 111518Z OCT 74
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3346
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 15436

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR EG UR XF
SUBJ: LEBANESE AMBASSADOR COMMENTS ON SOVIET ME POLICY

1. LEBANESE AMBASSDADOR JABRE CALLED ON ME OCTOBER 9 AT HIS REQUEST. WE DISCUSSED THE MIDDLE EAST.

2. THE AMBASSADOR MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT SOVIET POLICY IN THE AREA:

(A) THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN EDGING GRADUALLY TOWARD FULL ESPOUSAL OF THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL CAUSE. PODGORNY'S SPEECH IN SOFIA WAS ANOTHER STEP IN THIS DIRECTION. THEY NOW APPEAR TO RECOGNIZE THE PLO AS THE SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION IS IMPORTANT TO THE SOVIETS. AS THEY ARE WATCHING ARAB REACTIONS, THEY SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE.

(B) THE SOVIETS WILL PAY ALL EXPENSES FOR THE PLO
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OFFICE IN MOSCOW (JABRE SAID HE HEARD THIS DIRECTLY

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FROM ARAFAT). HOWEVER, THE SOVIETS ARE PUZZLED WHY THE PLO STILL HAS NOT MOVED TO OPEN THE OFFICE. ARAFAT'S POEOPLE SAY IT IS BECAUSE THE PLO IS "OVERLOADED" AT PRESENT AND TOO BUSY TO THINK ABOUT THE MECHANICS OF OPENING THE MOSCOW OFFICE. JABRE FELT THIS WAS PROBABLY TRUE.

(C) THE MIDDLE EASTERN SITUATION IS DANGEROUS. BOTH SIDES ARE ARMING, NO FURTHER PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARD ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, AND WAR COULD COME SOON. AT SAME TIME, SADAT'S INFLUENCE HAS FALLEN OFF. HE IS UNDER CRITICISM AT HOME BECAUSE THE PROMISED US AID FOR WHICH HE WENT ALL OUT HAS NOT BEEN FORTH-COMING TO THE EXTENT PROMISED. THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN TOUGH ON HIM AND THIS IS BEGINNING TO TELL. HIS "DEAL" SEVERAL MONTHS AGO WITH JORDAN ON THE PALESTINE ISSUE WAS RESENTED IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES AND BY THE PLO. THIS HAS HURT SADAT. FAHMY WILL ATTEMPT TO PATCH THINGS UP ON HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW, BUT IT WILL BE HARD FOR HIM TO DO SO WITHOUT OFFENDING THE U.S.

(D) THE SOVIETS ARE DEFINITELY INTERESTED IN RE-ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. JABRE HEARD IN JUNE IN HELSINKI FORM FINNISH OFFICIALS (FINLAND REPRESENTS THE USSR IN ISRAEL) THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD ESTABLISH RELATIONS "IN A FEW WEEKS" UNLESS SOMETHING HAPPENED. HE FEELS THE ISRAELIS THEMSELVES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DELAY. THE ARAB COUNTRIES ARE PRETENDING NOT TO NOTICE THE SOVIET INTEREST, BUT THEY ARE CONCERNED JUST THE SAME. IT MAY STILL TAKE TIME BEFORE SOVIET-ISRAELI RELATIONS ARE ESTABLISHED. STOESSEL

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